



Children's Services Annual Report

2024-25

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Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2024-25

Introduction

Fife's Children's Services Partnership involves a range of partners who provide services for children and young people. We promote, support and safeguard the wellbeing of our children and young people, by working collaboratively to provide early and preventative support for all.

This Annual Report reviews the progress that we have made in implementing the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26* during the past year. It describes a wide range of work involving staff and services across the Fife Children's Services Partnership. A significant part of this work is contributing to improved day-to-day support for children, young people and families (described in section 2 of this report). Further work is helping to strengthen the way that we collectively act to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable (described in section 3 of this report). Work is also ongoing to strengthen our longer-term strategic approach (described in section 4), to ensure that improvement work across the partnership has a wider impact on the lives of all children, young people and families in future years.

Collectively, this work is helping us to work towards achieving our vision: **"making Fife a place where every child and young person matters"**.

June 2025



Donald Macleod
Chair, Children in Fife
*Executive Director, Education
Fife Council*

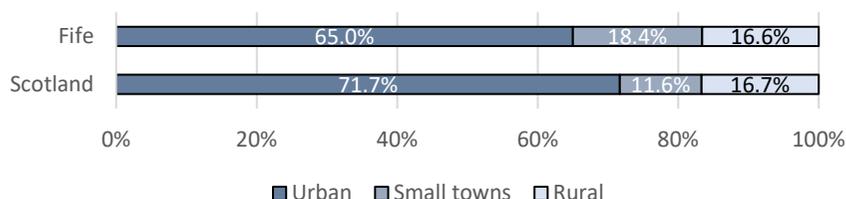


Lisa Cooper
Vice-Chair, Children in Fife
*Head of Primary & Preventative
Care Services, Fife Health and
Social Care Partnership*

Our context: the communities, children and young people of Fife

The geography of Fife

Fife has a mix of urban areas, small towns, and rural areas – the overall balance of each classification broadly resembles the geography of Scotland.



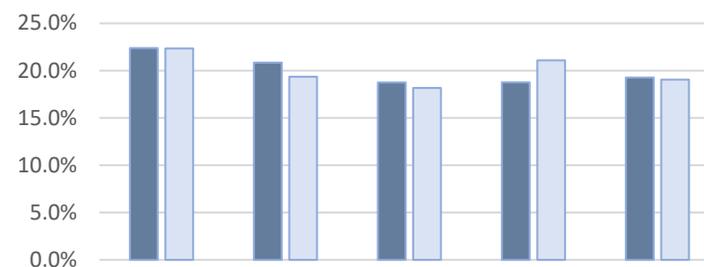
However, Fife's main urban areas (Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Glenrothes and the Levenmouth area) are smaller in scale and are more dispersed than Scotland's largest four cities, which are classified as large urban areas.

Area	Large urban	Other urban	Accessible small towns	Remote small towns	Accessible rural	Remote rural
Fife	0.0%	65.0%	18.4%	0.0%	16.6%	0.0%
Scotland	40.8%	30.9%	9.7%	1.9%	12.1%	4.6%

Area deprivation in Fife (SIMD)

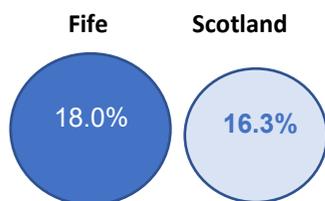
The table below shows the geographical distribution of school pupils in Fife and Scotland, based on the SIMD Quintile where they live.

SIMD Quintile 1 areas (SIMD Q1) are the most deprived in Scotland. SIMD Quintile 5 areas (SIMD Q5) are the least deprived. The profiles of Fife and Scotland are very similar.

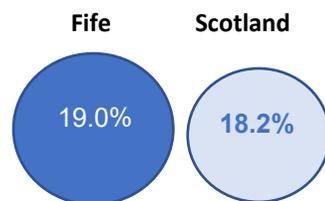


	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q2	SIMD Q3	SIMD Q4	SIMD Q5
Fife	22.4	20.8	18.8	18.8	19.3
Scotland	22.4	19.4	18.2	21.1	19.0

Measures of child and household poverty



By the **children in low income families** measure Fife ranks 9th of Scotland's 32 local authorities.



For **free school meal registrations in secondary schools** Fife ranks 7th of Scotland's 32 local authorities.

There are 69,642 children and young people aged 0-17 years in Fife; of these, 48,674 attend a Fife school. The table below shows some of the support needs & characteristics of these pupils.

Group	Number	%
With an additional support need	18,259	37.8
Living in SIMD Quintile 1	10,892	22.3
Speaking English as an Additional Language (not fluent)	3,376	6.9
Minority Ethnic	3,694	7.6
Assessed as having a disability	1,004	2.1
All school pupils	48,674	100.0

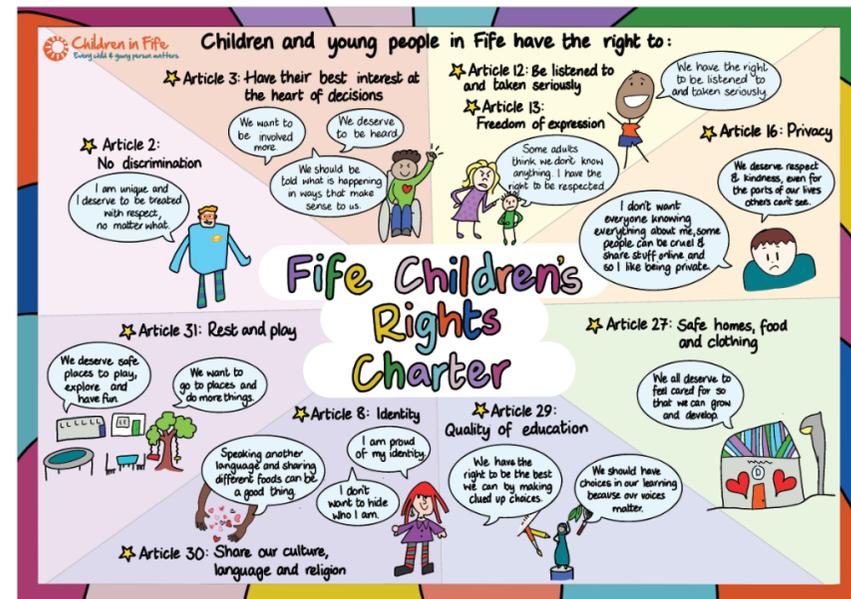
Section 1 – Some notable achievements in 2024-25

Improving Health & Wellbeing

- We have progressed work for our new pathway **supporting young people's mental and emotional wellbeing**. Legal and data-sharing issues are being addressed to enable the next phase, including a pilot starting in August 2025. (see p15)
- We have introduced new psychological support programmes in Nurture Centres which are helping to ensure more people are accessing the **Child Healthy Weight** service. The service is working with dental health teams to reinforce key messages about nutrition and its impact on both weight and oral health.
- We have trained Personal and Social Education (PSE) teachers to develop their confidence and knowledge in delivering **alcohol awareness** sessions with pupils. They then then introduced sessions to over 250 pupils in S2. Alongside this substance use awareness-raising workshops for parents were trialled and will now be rolled out across Fife. (see p22)

Improving Engagement

- We have introduced a refreshed **Participation and Engagement Framework** to ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to involving children and young people, reducing duplication and building on existing efforts (see p.19).
- We co-developed a **Children's Rights Charter** for Fife with children and young people, which will guide how we promote and uphold their rights across the partnership (see p.20).
- Together, the framework and charter strengthen our commitment to meaningful participation, ensuring young people are actively involved in shaping decisions that affect them. This will help **to better meet criterion 10 of the Statutory Guidance for Children's Services Planning**.



Better supporting families

- We have continued work to develop a more integrated, preventative approach by our Children's Services Partnership. This approach will be supported by new area-based **Early Help and Support** Teams within the Children & Families Social Work Service. The Early Help and Support model has been developed following a range of improvement work and data analysis and will provide a link with the ongoing development of a *No Wrong Doors* model for community support by the wider Fife Partnership (see p.18).
- We have delivered and reviewed an initial programme of partnership-wide practice development as part of whole family wellbeing developments. This has highlighted the potential for area-based **Communities of Practice** to engage local leaders with the ongoing development of partnership practice and area-based approaches. We will pilot area-based Communities of Practice during 2025-26 (see p.18).

Improving Equity & Equality

- Embedding of The **Fife Neurodevelopmental Pathway** continues. This is a multi-agency, single point of access assessment pathway, which is helping to strengthen support for children where there are concerns about neurodevelopment (see p.22).
- We have reviewed and refreshed our approach to **Supporting the Next Generation to Thrive**, by reducing barriers to positive life chances faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. A consolidated Poverty and Equalities group has been formed and has begun work – with the Children's Services Data Group – to develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to inform the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29 (see p.22).
- We have supported the work of the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, to ensure that the overarching **Plan for Fife** can achieve maximum impact across Fife's local communities (see p.23).

Improving our overarching approach to meeting need

- We have refreshed and relaunched our **Children in Fife website** (<https://children.fife.scot/>), to ensure that practitioners and staff across the partnership have clear and easily accessible guidance on using the Child Wellbeing Pathway and other core partnership approaches (see p.23)
- We have refreshed the Fife Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027, to strengthen our delivery of The Promise and work toward the 24-30 call to Action. The Plan identifies 7 priority areas to help expose and address challenges the faced by those in the care community (pp. 26-27).

Section 2 –
Our progress
with
improvement
in 2024-25

Our approach to improvement

The following page provides an overview of the priorities for improvement identified in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

There are four main areas of improvement:

- **Health & Wellbeing**
- **Supporting Families**
- **Engagement of our Children, Young People and Families**
- **Equity and Equality**

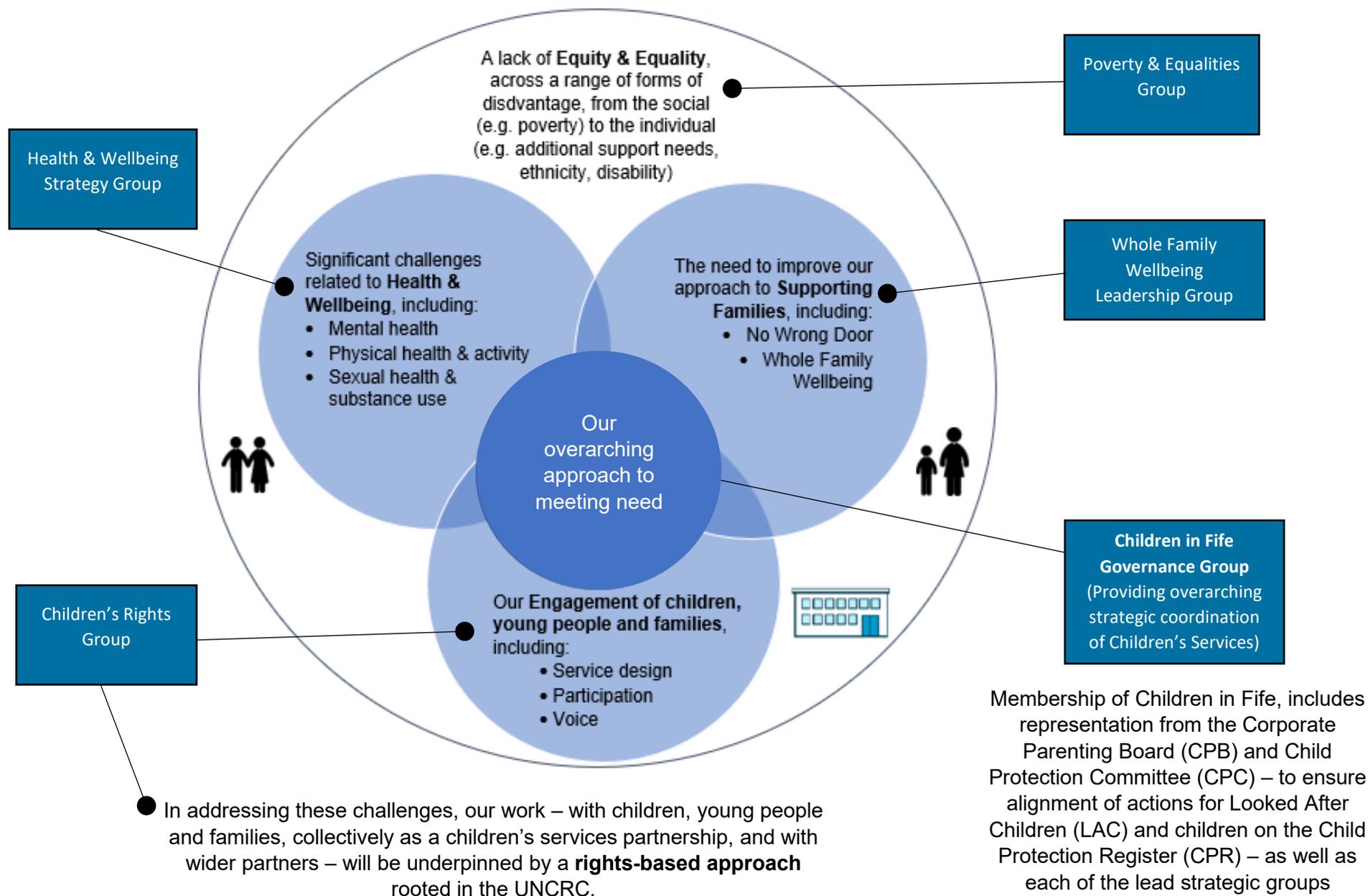
This improvement work is overseen by Children in Fife, the Governance Group for Fife Children's Services Partnership. The group receives regular updates from the strategic lead groups for each priority.

This section provides an update on work undertaken for these four improvement priorities.

Children in Fife oversees the partnership's wider approach to prevention and early intervention, its implementation of GIRFEC and Delivery of the Promise. Children in Fife ensures that our **overarching approach** to children's services meets the needs of all children and young people, including children and young people at risk of harm, in need of care, or in need of protection.

Section 3 of this Annual Report provides a review of this work.

Work to oversee implementation of the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26 is being led by the following strategic groups:



Our progress in improving Health and Wellbeing

Context

The **Health & Wellbeing Strategy Group** oversees implementation of the improvement plan for Health and Wellbeing.

The group includes lead members from the 3 key partnership groups that oversee work relating to health and wellbeing. It:

- Owns: the action plan for the improvement theme of Health & Wellbeing
- Provides a link to the work of the Fife Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP) and the Health and Social Care Partnership
- Promotes: within the UNCRC relating to health and wellbeing

The table below provides an update on progress in implementing the improvement plan for Health and Wellbeing, as set out in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26:

What is the key issue/ challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact as at March 2025	Next steps for year 2025-26
Multi-agency approaches to ensure access to mental health supports and services for all children, young people and their families	Improved accessibility to mental health supports for children, young people and their families, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time from the right service	A targeted pilot of the Single Point of Access (SPA) model was initiated in Auchmuty and Balwearie High Schools to streamline access to mental health services. This included the implementation of dummy case testing to evaluate system functionality and user experience. Feedback from school staff and multi-agency partners has been actively gathered and used to refine the SPA model. Additionally, the WYSA mental health support app was successfully extended to two more schools, broadening digital access to early intervention tools for young people.	Preliminary evaluation of the SPA pilot indicates improved coordination between education and health services, with early signs of reduced referral delays. Stakeholder feedback has highlighted increased clarity in referral pathways and enhanced confidence among staff in navigating mental health support systems. The expansion of the WYSA app has resulted in increased student engagement with self-help resources, with usage analytics showing a steady rise in logins and session completions. These	The next phase will focus on finalising the SPA model based on pilot feedback and preparing for a phased rollout across additional schools and early years settings. This will include the development of standardised referral protocols and training for frontline staff. Legal and technical frameworks for data sharing will be completed to support seamless multi-agency collaboration. Further evaluation of the WYSA app's impact will inform decisions on broader deployment. A communications strategy will be implemented to ensure all

			developments reflect a growing alignment between service delivery and the needs of children, young people, and families.	stakeholders are informed and engaged in the SPA expansion.
	Professional Development and capacity building opportunities are in place for all staff supporting children, young people and their families' mental health, focusing on early intervention approaches	A comprehensive approach to workforce development was initiated to strengthen early intervention capabilities across services supporting children, young people, and families. A draft workforce survey was developed to assess current training needs and inform future capacity-building efforts. Planning and scheduling for Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) training were completed, with delivery set for February 2025. Additionally, the Our Minds Matter (OMM) Framework was refreshed to reflect current best practices and prepared for dissemination across multi-agency partners. These initiatives were designed to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to respond effectively to emerging mental health needs.	Initial feedback from the draft workforce survey revealed that 62% of education staff identified a need for further RSHP training, highlighting a clear demand for enhanced professional learning. The relaunch of the OMM Framework has led to increased awareness and uptake among practitioners, contributing to more consistent and informed approaches to mental health support. Furthermore, there has been a noticeable improvement in multi-agency collaboration, with partners reporting greater alignment in early intervention strategies and shared understanding of referral pathways.	The next phase will involve finalising and distributing the workforce survey, followed by a detailed analysis of the results to shape a responsive and targeted training programme. Expansion of RSHP and broader mental health training will be prioritised, with a focus on accessibility and relevance across sectors. The OMM Framework will be embedded through a structured programme of workshops, peer learning sessions, and reflective practice opportunities. These efforts will be supported by a coordinated communication strategy to ensure consistent messaging and sustained engagement across all partner agencies. Scottish Government New Health Visitor Action Plan 2025-2035 has been developed focussing on early detection and prevention, supporting

				<p>families from earliest stages across Fife.</p> <p>The rollout of ICON across NHS Fife is underway, aiming to improve the recognition and response to head trauma in children, thereby enhancing safeguarding and early intervention efforts across the region.</p>
	<p>Improved multi-agency data to inform the mental health needs of young people and their families in Fife, ensuring that we respond appropriately</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made in enhancing the quality and integration of multi-agency data to better understand and respond to the mental health needs of children, young people, and their families in Fife. CAMHS and selected trial schools have collaborated on a data cleansing initiative to improve the accuracy and consistency of existing datasets. Concurrently, efforts have been made to align data collection methodologies across services, laying the groundwork for a more unified and responsive system. Strategic discussions have commenced to explore the legal and technical frameworks required for cross-system data sharing, with a view to enabling real-time insights and coordinated service delivery.</p>	<p>Early outcomes from the data alignment work have led to a clearer understanding of referral patterns, service utilisation, and existing gaps in provision. Stakeholders have reported improved visibility of trends and emerging needs, which has already informed adjustments to local service planning. The identification of data compatibility issues at an early stage has allowed for proactive resolution, ensuring that future systems will be more robust and interoperable. Engagement from both education and health partners has been strong, demonstrating a shared commitment to evidence-informed practice and collaborative problem-solving.</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on finalising data sharing agreements that comply with legal and ethical standards, enabling secure and efficient exchange of information across agencies. An integrated data dashboard will be developed and piloted to support real-time monitoring and strategic decision-making. Insights derived from the dashboard will be used to inform targeted interventions, resource allocation, and service redesign. Ongoing stakeholder engagement will ensure that the system remains responsive to the evolving needs of children, young people, and families, and that data is used ethically and effectively to drive continuous improvement.</p>

<p>Children & young people’s physical wellbeing and participation in physical activity & sport has been negatively impacted by the covid- 19 pandemic.</p> <p>The Scottish Parent Survey reported a consistent decline in children’s activity levels, socialisation & free play with other children, with the greatest impact on those most vulnerable and / or disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Increase access to sport & physical activity for our most vulnerable and / or disadvantaged Children & Young People.</p> <p>Enable Children, Young People & families to understand the importance of leading an active lifestyle, healthier diet and healthy weight.</p>	<p>A multi-faceted programme of work was implemented to address the decline in physical activity and wellbeing among children and young people, particularly those most vulnerable or disadvantaged. Key developments included the establishment of a stakeholder group and communication plan to coordinate efforts across sectors. The HENRY (Health, Exercise, Nutrition for the Really Young) training and train-the-trainer model were successfully rolled out, enhancing workforce capacity to support healthy lifestyle behaviours. The FifeLovesLife app was actively promoted to disseminate key health messages, while targeted projects—such as increasing female participation in sport at S1 and S2 levels—were initiated in response to insights from the Scottish Parent Survey. A suite of training options under the Prevention and Early Intervention programme was delivered to both professionals and community partners, alongside a focused campaign to raise awareness of health literacy and empower individuals to make informed health choices.</p>	<p>The “Active for Life” project reached completion, with a summary report pending publication. A system-based approach to physical activity is progressing, with a stakeholder event scheduled for October 2025 to consolidate learning and plan next steps. A mapping exercise identified available activities for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN), highlighting areas of good practice and gaps in provision. The HENRY train-the-trainer programme received positive evaluations, and the MINS Group began rolling out the “Connecting with Parents” psychological support model across nurture groups, resulting in increased referrals to Community Health and Wellbeing (CHW) services. Evaluation and audit of the Prevention and Early Intervention training programme are underway, and a Health Literacy action plan has been developed to guide future work. These initiatives collectively demonstrate a strengthened infrastructure for promoting physical wellbeing and inclusive access to activity.</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on addressing locality-level gaps in provision for children with ASN, using data gathered from the stakeholder event to inform planning. The PSE (Personal and Social Education) module on Physical Activity and Healthy Diet, piloted in one high school, will be evaluated for potential rollout across all secondary schools. The impact of the HENRY approach will be formally assessed, and findings will inform future delivery. Workforce training needs identified through the survey will shape the next iteration of the training programme. A coordinated communication strategy will be implemented to ensure consistent, evidence-based messaging across all platforms. Collaboration with Health Promotion (HP) teams will continue to raise awareness of the Prevention and Early Intervention training programme and embed it within local delivery frameworks.</p>
<p>Increasing the level of confidence,</p>	<p>Develop and deliver a workforce development</p>	<p>A comprehensive review and expansion of workforce development</p>	<p>Evaluation data indicates strong uptake and positive</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on embedding shared learning</p>

<p>competence and knowledge of the workforce to engage with children and young people about Healthy Relationships and Substance Use (including parental substance use)</p>	<p>programme for staff working with children and families.</p>	<p>initiatives were undertaken to enhance the capacity of staff working with children and families in the areas of Healthy Relationships and Substance Use. The training catalogue for 2025–26 was updated to include a broader range of TURAS modules and clinical courses, ensuring alignment with current best practices and emerging needs. The Young Person’s Drop-In Clinic marked its first year of operation, engaging 486 attendees and serving as a key access point for early intervention and support. Targeted outreach efforts were initiated, particularly with care-experienced young people and through school-based engagement in North East Fife, to ensure inclusive access to support and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>reception of the expanded training offer. Of the young people who accessed the Drop-In Clinic, 100% reported they would recommend the service to peers, highlighting its relevance and accessibility. A workforce survey yielded 85 responses, identifying specific training gaps in areas such as learning disabilities (LD), neurodiversity, and LGBTQI inclusion. These insights have informed the refinement of training content and delivery methods. School outreach activities have begun to foster stronger connections between education and health services, with early feedback suggesting improved staff confidence in addressing sensitive topics with young people.</p>	<p>opportunities between Social Work and Sexual Health teams to promote integrated practice. The Speakeasy model for parent and carer training will be expanded to support intergenerational learning and communication. Outreach efforts will continue, with a focus on evaluating the impact of new training strategies and engagement models. A continuous improvement approach will be adopted, using feedback and outcome data to refine training content, delivery formats, and support mechanisms. Emphasis will also be placed on ensuring that training is inclusive, trauma-informed, and responsive to the diverse needs of the workforce and the communities they serve.</p>
<p>Increasing the confidence, competence and knowledge of parents and carers to engage with children and young people about Healthy Relationships and Substance Use.</p>	<p>Develop and deliver resources, information, support and training to parents and carers.</p>	<p>A suite of targeted resources and training opportunities was developed and disseminated to support parents and carers in navigating conversations around healthy relationships, sexual health, and substance use. Key initiatives included the wide distribution of the Chat.scot resource, which offers structured, age-appropriate guidance for initiating and sustaining meaningful dialogue with children and young people. The TURAS Sexual Health</p>	<p>There has been a marked increase in the uptake and visibility of the Chat.scot resource among parent networks and community partners, indicating strong engagement and relevance. Early user feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many parents reporting increased confidence in initiating conversations with their children on topics</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on evaluating the reach, accessibility, and effectiveness of current resources through structured parent/carer feedback and engagement metrics. Training opportunities will be expanded using the Speakeasy model and other evidence-based approaches to support diverse learning needs. New materials will be developed to address the</p>

		<p>Module was actively promoted to enhance parental understanding and confidence in addressing sensitive topics. These tools were strategically integrated into broader Health and Wellbeing (HWB) communication campaigns to ensure consistency of messaging across services and platforms. Multi-agency collaboration underpinned the delivery of these initiatives, ensuring alignment with school-based education and community engagement efforts.</p>	<p>previously considered challenging. The integration of these resources into school and community settings has fostered a more cohesive approach to health education. Multi-agency partners have expressed strong support for the continued dissemination of these tools, recognising their value in complementing formal education and reinforcing key messages at home.</p>	<p>specific needs of care-experienced families, neurodiverse children, and other underrepresented groups. Strengthening partnerships with schools, community organisations, and health services will be a priority to embed parent/carer engagement into local delivery plans and ensure a sustainable, inclusive approach to family-based health education.</p>
<p>Ensuring safety health and wellbeing of children and young people who experience alcohol or drug related hospital admissions</p>	<p>Ensuring safety health and wellbeing of children and young people who experience alcohol or drug related hospital admissions</p>	<p>A multi-pronged approach was implemented to enhance the support available to children and young people affected by substance use, with a focus on early intervention, education, and coordinated care. A direct referral pathway was developed in collaboration with Clued Up and Children’s Wellbeing Liaison Nurses (CWLN), enabling streamlined access to community-based services through a QR code system. This was complemented by the piloting of a revised education model in three secondary schools, which included teacher Continuing Professional Development (CPD), pupil-focused sessions, and parent/carer workshops. These efforts were aligned with national strategy and tailored to local needs. Additionally, over 1,400 pupils participated in the Smoke Factor and Smoke Free Class programmes, and the Young People</p>	<p>Initial data from the hospital liaison pathway indicates an average of three referrals per month, with a 71% engagement rate—most of whom were previously unknown to services. This demonstrates the pathway’s effectiveness in reaching vulnerable young people at critical moments. Referrals were received from all seven localities, with a notable proportion involving 18-year-olds and school-aged children, highlighting the broad reach of the initiative. The educational pilot reached over 250 pupils and received positive feedback from both staff and students, with teachers reporting increased confidence in delivering substance use education.</p>	<p>The focus for the coming year will be on evaluating the long-term outcomes for young people referred through the hospital liaison pathway, including wellbeing indicators and progress toward personal goals. The planning group will continue to meet bi-monthly to monitor implementation, address emerging challenges, and ensure the pathway remains responsive and effective. Consideration will be given to expanding the model to include young adults over 18, while maintaining a person-centred, choice-based approach. The educational model will be refined based on pilot feedback, with potential for wider rollout. Continued collaboration with Clued Up, CWLN, and education partners</p>

		<p>Tobacco and Vaping Interest Group (YPTViG) was launched to strengthen youth-led prevention and cessation initiatives.</p>	<p>Furthermore, 65% of pupils demonstrated improved understanding of the risks associated with substance use. The creation of an e-referral pathway and alignment with national campaigns further enhanced the accessibility and visibility of support services.</p>	<p>will be essential to embed these practices sustainably and ensure that all young people affected by substance use receive timely, compassionate, and coordinated support.</p> <p>A Vulnerable Young Persons Protocol for those aged 16 or 17, (or a young person under the age of 26 who has a statutory entitlement to after-care services) has been developed by the Guidance Implementation Workforce Development Group in conjunction with colleagues in Adult Support and Protection to meet the requirements of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021, updated 2023). This multi-agency protocol aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear mechanism for practitioners to refer children and young people exposed to vulnerable and dangerous situations to the appropriate risk management process • Support practitioners to select the most appropriate pathway to safeguard the child or young person.
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<p>Understanding and responding to children and young people who are Care experienced or in need of additional support in relation to Healthy Relationships and Substance use (Including parental/ carer substance use)</p>	<p>Explore the needs of care experienced receiving additional support in relation to healthy relationships and substance use.</p>	<p>Initial planning has commenced to better understand and address the unique needs of care-experienced children and young people, particularly in the context of healthy relationships and substance use, including parental or carer substance use. A targeted engagement strategy is being developed to ensure that the voices of care-experienced young people are central to service design. Early collaboration between Social Work and Sexual Health Services has led to the development of shared learning sessions aimed at fostering a more integrated and trauma-informed approach. These sessions are intended to build mutual understanding, improve referral pathways, and ensure that support is both accessible and relevant to the lived experiences of this group.</p> <p>There is increased support offered to care experience children and young people by the School Nursing service with an initial health needs assessment offered within 28 days of becoming looked after and an annual health and wellbeing assessment now offered with ongoing direct access to the service which provides the opportunity of identifying unmet needs and providing targeted support. Family Nurse partnership has extended their programme offer to affirm the importance of tailoring services to the specific needs of care-experienced young people, and there</p>	<p>While still in the early stages, the initiative has demonstrated a strong commitment to co-production and inclusive practice. Stakeholder feedback has affirmed the importance of tailoring services to the specific needs of care-experienced young people, and there is growing momentum among partners to embed this approach. The groundwork laid through inter-agency collaboration has created a foundation for more responsive and coordinated support. The engagement strategy has been positively received, with early indications of increased interest from both practitioners and young people in shaping future service delivery.</p>	<p>The next phase will focus on delivering a structured programme of shared professional learning, informed by the insights gathered during the engagement phase. Findings will be used to co-design targeted interventions and adapt existing services to better meet the needs of care-experienced young people. Mechanisms will be established to monitor uptake, satisfaction, and outcomes, ensuring that services are both effective and equitable. Continued emphasis will be placed on building trusting relationships, reducing stigma, and ensuring that all young people—regardless of background—have access to safe, supportive, and empowering environments in which to learn about and discuss healthy relationships and substance use.</p>
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Our Progress in better Supporting Families

Context

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is being used in Fife as the basis for improving support for families. This work is overseen by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group, which includes representation from partners within Fife Children's Services Partnership.

The first Whole Family Wellbeing Review (2023-24)

Initially, the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund supported a range of projects developed by partners, to support improvement across all aspects of Whole Family Wellbeing. These projects sought to strengthen and extend the impact of existing approaches, or to support improvement work to address specific, known gaps or challenges in current practice, support or provision.

An initial review of Whole Family Wellbeing Fund improvement work was undertaken during 2023-24. This sought to assess how well our approach met the key criterion for Whole Family Wellbeing Funding: **to support transformational change across the system to deliver whole family support which is sustainable and focused on earlier intervention and support**. An overview of this initial Whole Family Wellbeing Review – including its findings and recommendations – can be found in the *Fife Children's Services Annual Report 2023-24*.

The second Whole Family Wellbeing Review (2024-25)

A second round of review meetings has been undertaken during 2024-25, to further review progress with ongoing projects in Fife supported by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. This cycle of review meetings has sought: to ensure that learning and good practice achieved from initial WFW funded projects are integrated into our services; and, to support ongoing improvement in the partnership's ways of working.

Key developments during 2024-25

The following page outlines the updated drivers that have been adopted during 2024-25 as a focus for further improvement of family support in Fife. Appendix 1 to this Annual Report provides a more detailed overview of the work progressed within projects funded by the Whole Family Wellbeing Review over the past year.

The initial Whole Family Wellbeing Review also highlighted a number of key recommendations to improve wider children's services partnership working, which were accepted by Children in Fife. Progress made with improvement actions to address these recommendations during 2024-25 can be found in section 4 of this report.

The updated drivers for WFW

The comprehensive review undertaken of all funded work during 2024-25 supported an evidence base which has informed 4 main priorities for WFW in 2025-26. These are:

Early help and support

Evaluation of evidence group work and earlier support to families at a community level has informed this priority resulting in a large-scale review of the Children & Families Social Work and Family Support Teams. This has culminated in the development of 7 Early Help and Support Teams, in the 7 localities across Fife with a focus on driving forward early help and support as part of an integrated approach. The need to deliver responsive and agile services to households, children, young people and families is also at the centre of the No Wrong Door developments ensuring a seamless pathway to access support. The WFW driver of better access and availability of support is central to early help and support developments, and this will be a key priority for 2025-26.

Workforce development, culture and leadership

A confident and competent workforce delivering effective services through a shared set of values and principles is a key priority supporting a learning organisation approach in Fife. The Practice development sessions delivered across the 7 localities have been subject to an independent evaluation which has supported thinking in terms of next steps to further develop a collaborative approach to delivery of support to families. A *Community of Practice* model is being proposed which will focus on early help and support, engage local leaders to identify and support learning needs and further develop practice, ultimately to improve the experience and outcomes for CYP&F.

Commissioning of whole family support services

The importance of a whole system approach is central to WFW, and this considers the approach to commissioning based on best practice frameworks. Strategic commissioning of whole family support will be subject to a review in 2025 to ensure services are aligned and in place to enhance the redesigned model in the C&F Social Work Service and across the wider system. This will be an opportunity to review impact, review key performance indicators and support the objective of an effective and sustainable model.

Data, Performance and use of quality improvement methodology

Measuring the impact of support across the system is essential to ensure the right services and in place and delivery mechanisms effective. Work is underway to capture a high-level system view to support further analysis as well as the development of a dashboard for early help and support. The importance of applying rigour through the use of a range of quality improvement tools has been identified as a priority for 2025-26.

Our Progress in improving Engagement

Context

The **Children's Rights Group** oversees implementation of the improvement plan for Engagement. It is a partnership group that oversees work to promote children's rights and the partnership's approach to participation and engagement.

The table below provides an update on progress in implementing the improvement plan for Engagement, as set out in the Fife Children's Services Plan 2023-26:

What is the key issue/challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period, including evidence of progress April 2024 - March 2025	Next steps for year 2025-26
Develop a consistent approach to participation and engagement with children and young people.	<p>Jointly agree the principles of effective engagement and participation.</p> <p>Create an overview of engagement and participation across services.</p>	<p>Update Children's Services Participation and Engagement framework in line with new legislative requirements.</p> <p>Begun to map existing groups/services that engage with children and young people across Fife in progress.</p>	<p>Support the workforce to embed Children Services participation and engagement framework into practice.</p> <p>Participation and Engagement subgroup to complete mapping of ways of engaging with children and young people across Fife.</p> <p>Streamline Participation & Engagement activity and minimise duplication in order to build on existing work and avoid overburdening our children and young people.</p>
Ensure that there are active and meaningful engagement of children and young people in decisions that affect them and the planning and delivery of services across Fife.	Support the framework devised by young people during the Children's Services Plan 2021-23	In line with above action, refreshed Participation and Engagement Framework has been created to support the impact and outcome of participation and engagement approaches.	Support the workforce to embed Children Services participation and engagement framework into practice.

<p>Ensuring that we work with – and support – young people in a rights-based way.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of UNCRC across wider partnership services</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Workforce Development Subgroup)</i></p>	<p>We carried out a workforce questionnaire.</p> <p>We have created a Children’s Rights section in Children in Fife website, to be populated with relevant materials.</p> <p>Multiagency training sessions on the effective engagement of children and young people delivered.</p>	<p>Ensure Children’s Rights section of Children in Fife website is up to date and relevant.</p> <p>We will support workforce development to embed effective engagement with children and young people into everyday practice.</p>
	<p>Promote a rights-based approach through the introduction of a Children’s Rights Charter.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: To be agreed)</i></p>	<p>We engaged with children and young people to support the development of a children’s rights Charter in Fife (supported by Corra funding).</p> <p>Children’s Rights charter visual created.</p>	<p>Agree a unified approach to upholding and promoting children’s rights across the partnership.</p> <p>Create an accreditation framework to measure maturity of participation and engagement in single agencies, based on the P+E Framework + CRWIAs.</p>
	<p>Develop Guidance for creating child friendly complaints processes.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Child Friendly Complaints Subgroup)</i></p>	<p>We have developed a set of good practice guidelines and overarching principles to support child-friendly complaints handling.</p> <p>Several individual agencies have already implemented their own child-friendly complaints processes. Within Education, consultation is underway to design and streamline a consistent approach.</p>	<p>Continue building understanding of child-friendly complaints by learning from best practice and embedding it into everyday culture.</p> <p>Work in partnership with compliance teams to ensure consistent and effective approaches across all services.</p>
	<p>Ensure that we fulfil our requirement to report progress to the Scottish Government.</p> <p><i>(Delivery Group: Children’s Right Strategic Oversight Group).</i></p>	<p>Evidence of impact and progress is being gathered continuously to support regular reporting on Children’s Rights in Fife.</p>	<p>Ensure all partnership reporting obligations to the Scottish Government are met in 2026.</p> <p>Continue to develop and expand the use of EQIAs and CRWIAs to demonstrate how children’s rights are being embedded across the partnership.</p>

Our Progress in Improving Equity and Equality

Context

A review of groups was undertaken during 2024-25 to better focus work across the partnership addressing disadvantage and inequality. This has resulted in the consolidation of a number of existing groups into a **Poverty and Equalities** Group.

The Poverty and Equalities Group will provide support and challenge to the Children's Services Data Group during the development of the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** for the Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29. This will help to ensure that:

- The JSNA gathers and analyses current evidence about all forms of disadvantage and vulnerability for children. This will be a key element in *improving the evidence base relating to poverty and crisis*, as it affects children and young people in Fife.
- The impact of work across the partnership to support all relevant national policies is understood and evidenced, and links to outcomes and measures within the National Performance Framework are appropriately and explicitly made.
- Ongoing developments to improve data for the Fife Children's Services Partnership support the ability to identify, track and monitor outcomes for – and the impact of improvement work with – all key groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

The Poverty and Equalities Group will maintain a strategic overview of work across the Children's Services Partnership to *Support the Next Generation to Thrive*, by reducing barriers to positive life chances faced by disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. This work aligns with Part C of the national tackling child poverty delivery plan, *Best Start, Bright Futures*.

Supporting the next generation to thrive (Part C)

Embedding of The **Fife Neurodevelopmental Pathway** has continued over the past year. This is a multi-agency, single point of access assessment pathway, which is helping to strengthen support for children where there are concerns about neurodevelopment.

As part of its work to *Support the Next Generation to Thrive*, the Poverty and Equalities Group will also:

- Ensure that the impact of improvement work to better *Support the Next Generation to Thrive* is clearly set out and reported on within the Local Child Poverty Action Report for Fife.
- Support the work of the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, to ensure that the overarching **Plan for Fife** can achieve maximum impact across Fife's local communities.

As part of its work to support the *Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board* within the wider Fife Partnership, the Children's Services Partnership also supports work to address Parts A and B of the national tackling child poverty delivery plan, *Best Start, Bright Futures*. A summary of this work is given below. A fuller account will be included in the *Fife Local Child Poverty Report 2024-25*.

Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work (Part A)

- The **Early Adopter Community (EAC) Project** in Levenmouth is expanding childcare support. Methilhill Community Children's Initiative launched additional after-school club places in November 2024.

Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs (Part B)

- **Support & Connect** continues to assist families referred by Education, Social Work, and Family Support. **Boosting Budgets** supported 55 families, delivering 104 sessions, with a total financial gain of £103,249.27.
- The **Cost of the School Day (CoSD)** initiative is embedded in all schools' improvement plans. Schools are addressing poverty-related challenges through income maximisation, dignified food access, and support for school trips.
- Efforts to address **homelessness among school-aged learners** continues to progress, with strong collaboration between housing and education. A pilot project in Dunfermline aims to improve schools' awareness of homeless families.
- The first **Fife Education Welfare Network** meeting was held in January with 70 attendees, including Poverty Leads and Welfare Support staff. The network provides a central resource for school staff to access welfare and benefits support, share best practices, and build local connections.

Next Steps

A review is ongoing – with the wider Fife Partnership – of arrangements to improve the alignment and governance of Children's Services Planning, as a key element of the Plan for Fife (Fife's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan). The work of the Poverty and Equalities group will support a clearer, more comprehensive description of the collective contribution of children's, adults and community-based services to improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Fife. This will help to **better meet criterion 6 of the Statutory Guidance for Children's Services Planning**.

Section 3 – our overarching approach to meeting need

Our approach to implementing GIRFEC



The Child Wellbeing Pathway is Fife’s multi-agency process in place across the Children’s Services Partnership to support implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). The Pathway was refreshed in 2023-24 to take account of new national GIRFEC guidance and also national Child Protection Guidance.

What is the key issue/ challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact in 2024-25	Next steps for year 2025-26
Ensuring that the Child Wellbeing Pathway provides an effective basis for our GIRFEC approach	Ensure all staff have clear guidance on the use of the Child Wellbeing Pathway	The Children’s Services Partnership has refreshed and relaunched its Children in Fife website (https://children.fife.scot/). The website and CWP were an initial focus for a revised communications strategy, implemented during 2024/25.	<p>The Animate evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed the importance of multi-agency workforce development opportunities. These were found to provide opportunities to break down barriers, understand roles and remits and promote collaborative working. • Proposed the establishment of a <i>Community of Practice</i> within each local area, providing an opportunity: to strengthen partnership connections at a local level; and, to improve understanding of roles and remits across partners. • Reaffirmed the need for clear leadership across all partners, to convey a clear message to the workforce about the importance of partnership working. 	<p>A model of local area <i>Communities of Practice</i> will be developed during the period 2025-27. This will support better local area working and identify the Practice Development needs of teams across Fife’s seven local areas.</p> <p>A “proof of concept” Whole System Framework is being designed, to better describe core partnership processes and to provide a basis for understanding the journey of children through key processes and services. This will be reviewed in 2025-26, with the aim of launching a pilot version to support implementation of the Fife Children’s Services Plan 2026-29.</p>
	Workforce development on use of the Child Wellbeing Pathway	Multi-agency Practice Development Sessions have been delivered over the course of 2024-25. A review was commissioned from external consultants (Animate), to assess the impact of the sessions.		
	Ensure that we are recording use of the CWP and are able to monitor the journey of children	Better understanding the journey of children and young people through partnership services is a key focus for ongoing work to develop a Whole System Framework for the Children’s Services Partnership.		

Our approach to Delivering the Promise

Work on Delivering the Promise in Fife is overseen by Children in Fife, the governance group for the Fife Children’s Services Partnership. The table below provides a summary overview of progress in addressing the key actions identified to strengthen Fife’s approach in the Fife Children’s Services Plan 2023-26. The following pages provide a more detailed review of ongoing work.



What is the key issue/ challenge?	What do we need to do to address this?	Summary of progress made during period April 2024 - March 2025	Evidence of progress and impact in 2024-25	Next steps for year 2025-26
Keeping The Promise in Fife	<p>Ongoing role of Promise in Fife Lead Officer, to provide a strategic lead for The Promise and to coordinate with other aspects of children’s services.</p> <p>Awareness of the Promise and its importance to the work of all in Fife Partnership – as corporate parents</p>	<p>A lead office for the Promise role remains active in Fife and agreed until March 2026.</p> <p>The lead officer has taken a lead in developing a more coordinated approach to the Promise across the Children’s Services Partnership and the Fife Corporate Parenting Board.</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Plan developed.</p>	<p>New Lead Officer appointed in April 2025</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Plan has identified 7 key areas of focus for the period 2024 - 2027</p>	<p>Embedding the Children’s Right Charter across the Partnership.</p> <p>Develop systems for participation and co-design to ensure change will have been influenced by voices of care experienced young people.</p> <p>Route map development and action taken in relation to The Promise Scotland 24 – 30 plan.</p> <p>Establishment of a communication Strategy for The Promise.</p>
	Data for the Promise, Corporate Parenting Board	The Promise Lead Officer has undertaken initial work to collate and improve the reporting of key data for care experienced young people in Fife.	Children in Fife and the Fife Corporate Parenting Board are receiving regular and structured updates on key data.	Further development of Data streams that show the whole person capturing experiences of children, young people and families.

Fife Corporate Parenting Board

The work of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) is to oversee the strategic delivery of The Promise in Fife. This Promise is a key driver of change for care experienced young people, placing responsibility on practitioners across all disciplines to support care experienced young people to achieve good outcomes. This relates to attainment within education, having their health needs met, and access to local intensive support to enable them to remain within their wider families (Kinship Care), in the places they know, with those they love. Children in Fife have agreed that the work of The Promise will report directly to the Corporate Parenting Board given their interconnected responsibilities.

FCPB is committed to having a positive impact on individual experience and outcomes by addressing systemic, structural and societal inequality, exclusion and discrimination that the care experienced community can and does face.

There are children and adults who were previously looked after in Fife, and it is these collective voices we strive to hear. Services feedback to the FCPB around the feedback mechanisms that they have in place to gather feedback on the challenges and successes when they leave care.

The 8 weekly reports submitted to the FCPB capture the local successes of those who are currently cared for in Fife. Examples have included the National House Project successfully supporting all 5 cohorts of care leavers to manage their own homes, with no experience of failed tenancy. Employability and Education services have also embedded enhanced supports across their services and give priority to care experienced young people, recognising their additional vulnerabilities without treating them differently from their peers. The school nursing service have developed a self-referral tool for young people aged 12- 19 through a QR code. The redesign of Children and Families Social work to Early help and support teams and Enhanced teams which aim to deliver services that are accessible at the right time, build capacity and resilience in families, are co-produced, reduce the need for crisis intervention, are budget efficient and have a skilled and confident workforce with a “can do” approach.

We know there are a disproportionate number of care experienced young people who experience multiple disadvantages such as homelessness, substance use, mental health and conflict with the law. Supports are being developed to improve outcomes for care experienced young people at risk of secure care or Justice involvement through the development of the Youth Intervention Service and Next Turn in Children, Families and Justice social work services.

It is these inequalities on an individual and structural basis that the FCPB seeks to expose and address, especially when considered through the lens of poverty, trauma, and loss, that is indelibly linked with the lived experiences of those in the care community.

Strategic aims

The Children & Families Belonging to Fife (B2F) strategy and our Children's Services Plan are strongly aligned to the key building blocks of the Promise and continue to be successful in addressing the balance of care.

Over the last 6 years, the profile of care in Fife has significantly changed, in alignment with B2F and the national drivers, with most young people who need alternative care now being placed within kinship arrangements. This very much sets the tone and culture for supporting children and young people within their own family and community wherever safe to do so, with the right supports, to ensure they feel loved and cared for.

Corporate Parenting Training sessions have been developed to highlight and improve the understanding of Corporate Parenting responsibilities across the wider workforce. This should improve collective understanding of the experiences of the care experienced community, including the importance of being trauma informed and the connections to the priority areas of The Promise.

Corporate Parenting Plan

To deliver on the FCPB framework, the Board has developed a new Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 2027. The Plan identifies 7 priority areas for the FCPB to focus on. Key highlights for each area are listed below:

Improvement activity 1: We will provide safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for care experienced and looked after children

- The focus over the course of the plan is to listen and learn from the feedback of children and young people and their families with care experience. Ensure all corporate parents offer effective intervention to support Looked After Children at Home, and supporting young parents with care experience to prepare for parenthood proportionately and with compassion. Young people leaving care will also be provided with additional support to have access to sustainable housing.

Improvement activity 2: Enable all care experienced and looked after children to develop and maintain positive relationships with their family – especially brothers and sisters, friends, professionals and other trusted adults:

- Corporate parents will be focused on activities to support brothers and sisters to live together where it is safe to do so, but if they are separated, support them to retain positive relationships with one another. Young people leaving care will have a

pathway plan which meets their individual needs, and all carers in fife will be supported through training and supervision to understand the importance of relationships.

Improvement activity 3: We will uphold and promote children's rights with a particular focus on participation

- Corporate Parents will focus on supporting children and young people to understand their rights and access advocacy support whilst they are in care and after care. Services will be supported to embed improved participation approaches across Fife, whilst ensuring voice is truly heard and responded to, and considered within the Corporate Parenting Board.

Improvement activity 4: Secure positive educational outcomes for care experienced and looked after children

- Supporting all children with care experience to have a Coordinated Support Plan which identifies their needs and how these will be met. Ensuring corporate parents demand that we are ambitious for all children with care experience to learn and be the best they can be. Effectively preparing young people for life afterschool and supporting them to access work, apprenticeships or higher education opportunities. Looked after young people should be supported in a person-centred way to access education and should not be excluded from school.

Improvement activity 5: Improve the physical and/or mental health of care experienced and looked after children

- Corporate parents will work together to support all young people to have their health needs assessed when they first come into care. Services will work together to reduce the number of placements moves a young person has and improve the coordination between services which support the mental wellbeing of young people at all stages and particularly transitions.

Improvement activity 6: Increase the number of care leavers in higher education, training, apprenticeships and employment

- Supporting young people with care experience to access and succeed in college/university. Develop a prioritised care experienced apprenticeship scheme across the council and partners. Upskilling staff to provide trauma informed careers advice and employability support.

Improvement activity 7: Reduce the number of care experienced and looked after children who enter the justice system

- In line with legislation, review and develop Early and Effective Intervention pathways to redirect young people away from the justice system. Corporate parents will work closely to support the development of a new Youth Intervention Service that will support young people /children who are at risk of entering secure care or being in conflict with the law.

Voice of the Child

The FCPB and The Promise can only be successful if it listens to those with lived experience. Our online feedback tools were evaluated in 2024. The use of these was low in comparison to the overall looked after community. Feedback from young people highlighted a preference to speak to key adults around them, including teachers, social workers and advocacy workers who they felt could share their views instead of using an online system. It was identified that there is a good range of options available to young people to share their views and therefore our online feedback tools were not renewed when their contract expired. Work is underway through the Children's Rights Participation and Engagement Subgroup to map all existing channels of participation to hear the voices of young people.

Fife is a Bairns Hoose pathfinder, and an element of that work is driving forward the participation and engagement work to ensure that children and young people with lived experience are involved with every aspect of designing Bairns Hoose in Fife.

The Children's Rights agenda and implementation of UNCRC in Fife within Fife with our communication and workforce development strategy. The Fife Children's Rights Charter was co-produced with children and young people in Fife and this was launched in December 2024. A new Children's Rights service is also being developed within the Children and Families service, with the aim of increasing the capacity of advocacy support available to young people and increasing their participation in decision making processes.

The FCPB continues to develop a more visible position across Fife, advocating for the care experienced community, through local community planning forums. By building up this positive presence the collective voices of the care community in Fife should be central in driving forward the transformational change required to address the inequalities faced.

Section 4 – improving our strategic approach

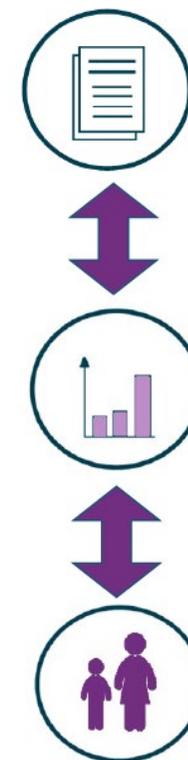
The initial review of Whole Family Wellbeing, undertaken in 2023-24, highlighted a number of areas for improvement that were relevant to wider partnership working across children’s services. Improvement actions were identified by Children in Fife to address these issues, which were outlined in Section 4 of the *Fife Children’s Services Annual Report 2023-24*. This section of the report summarises the steps taken during 2024-25 to implement immediate improvement actions. It also outlines the planned next steps to progress longer term improvement actions during 2025-26.

Immediate improvement actions taken during 2024-25

A **Lead Performance Analyst for Children’s Services** has been recruited – with support from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund – to provide the capacity needed to improve the partnership’s use of data. The additional capacity and skills provided by this post have been instrumental to enable work undertaken during 2024-25 to:

- Scope, plan and begin initial evidence gathering for a *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)* of children’s services. This will inform the choice of improvement priorities and measures of impact for the Fife Children’s Services Plan 2026-29. The scope of the JSNA includes: a clear mapping of evidence relating to national policies and related outcomes within the National Performance Framework (**to better meet criterion 2 of the Statutory Guidance for Children’s Services Planning**); an overview of how resources are being used to meet current needs and address improvement priorities across the Children’s Services Partnership (**to meet criterion 12 of the Statutory Guidance**).
- Improve *core data processes*, including the gathering and reporting of data. This work will be further developed during 2025-26, as further work is undertaken with members of the Children’s Services Data Group to finalise the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Undertake scoping and initial development work for a “*whole system*” framework of Fife children’s services. This work has established a number of systems maps for core partnership processes and services. These will be used to develop and pilot a whole-system framework during 2025-26, which will be used to support implementation of the Fife Children’s Services Plan 2026-29.

Support from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has also enabled the establishment of a post of **Policy Officer for Children’s Services**. This post will build on the model provided by the Whole Family Wellbeing Review, to strengthen the capacity available for structured, strategic self-evaluation of improvement actions across all aspects of Children’s Services. Recruitment to this post is currently in progress.



Longer-term improvement actions

Work has progressed during 2024-25 to improve the partnership's **approach to strategic improvement** with the aim of:

- Ensuring that expertise in **quality improvement** approaches is used to better identify and support issues of strategic or system-level importance, with a view to structured scale and spread of improvement.
- Improving our **strategic planning**, to ensure that improvement actions are more clearly supported by a well formulated and testable proposition (i.e., a theory of change) with appropriate measures to evidence the short-, medium- and longer-term impact of improvement work.

Developing a more strategic use of Quality Improvement methodology

During the past year a pilot programme has been run by the Fife CYPIC group, supported by a faculty of four ScIL trained improvement leaders from across the partnership. The programme was targeted at inter-agency partnership work, in order to identify and support improvement work with the potential to achieve a strategic impact. The successful project teams undertook a QI training programme, which concluded in June 2025. The projects addressed a range of challenges, but reflected themes strongly linked with the key challenges facing the partnership (including the impact of poverty, improving the wellbeing of young people, and strengthening the voice of children and young people in service design).

It is intended to run a second cohort of the programme later in 2025-26, to identify and support improvement projects that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the improvement priorities in the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29*, leading to scale and spread of improvement. These will be identified by the strategic leads developing the improvement actions for the 2026-29 Plan.

Improving our strategic planning

An action plan has been agreed by the Children in Fife Governance Group to: develop a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Fife Children's Services; and, update the Fife Children's Services Plan for 2026-29. A key element of this planned work is a more rigorous cycle of strategic self-evaluation during 2025-26 – supported through the capacity provided by the Policy Officer for Children's Services – which will provide an enhanced level of support and challenge for strategic leads for the partnership's current improvement priorities. This will aim to ensure that:

- Learning from current improvement planning can be used to improve the strategic approach to – and system level impact achieved by – the *Fife Children's Services Plan 2026-29*.
- Improvement actions in the 2026-29 Plan are more clearly supported by a well formulated and testable proposition (i.e., a theory of change) with appropriate measures to evidence the short-, medium- and longer-term impact of improvement work.

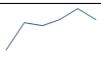
Section 5 – Outcomes for Children and Young People

The **Fife Wellbeing Indicator Set** provides an overview of key outcomes for children and young people in Fife. The table below provides a 5-year trend view of current outcomes. Baseline data for the current children’s services plan is highlighted in orange.

Measure		Fife							Benchmark <i>(national unless stated otherwise)</i>						Trend vs benchmark	
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	5 year trend	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
	Context															
FWI 1	Children in Low Income Family Measure (CILIF) - relative poverty (aged under 16)	19.4%	22.2%	18.5%	19.1%	19.7%	18.0%		16.8%	19.5%	16.8%	16.9%	17.8%	16.3%		
FWI 2	Percentage of P5-S6 children who agree that their local area is a good place to live	<i>Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022/April 2023)</i>					60.9%	62.3%		<i>Source: National HWB Census 2021-22</i>			64.5%	N/A	N/A	
	Safe															
FWI 3	Children on the Child Protection Register per 10,000 aged 0-17	31.8	22.9	23.9	21.4	13.9	21.0		28.0	28.8	23.2	22.3	20.8	18.7		
	(Number on CPR)	(205 CPR)	(147 CPR)	(152 CPR)	(136 CPR)	(97 CPR)	(130 CPR)		(2580 CPR)	(2641 CPR)	(2119 CPR)	(2031 CPR)	(2094 CPR)	(2129 CPR)		
FWI 4	LAC per 1,000 CYP aged 0-17	13.0	12.8	11.4	10.4	10.6	10.4		13.9	14.1	12.9	12.3	12.1	11.7		
	(Number of LAC)	(935 LAC)	(919 LAC)	(817 LAC)	(748 LAC)	(740 LAC)	(727 LAC)		(14262 LAC)	(14458 LAC)	(13255 LAC)	(12596 LAC)	(12206 LAC)	(11844 LAC)		
FWI 5	Measures of system success, relating to the impact of scaffolding to support prevention	<i>To be developed</i>							<i>To be developed</i>							

Healthy																
FWI 6	% of pregnancies where women reported being current smokers at ante-natal	18.0%	19.5%	18.8%	16.6%	15.6%	13.7%		15.2%	14.6%	13.9%	13.1%	11.9%	11.0%		
FWI 7	Average Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing (WEMWBS) Score for S2-S6 children	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)					43.8	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			45.3	N/A	N/A	
FWI 8	Referral to CAMHS as a rate per 1000 people aged 0 to 17 years	34.2	40.9	38.1	46.9	39.9	39.8		34.7	33.9	28.1	36.7	37.6	36.2		
FWI 9	% babies being exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks	29.6%	30.6%	30.7%	30.9%	29.5%	30.9%		31.9%	31.6%	32.0%	32.2%	32.0%	32.9%		
FWI 10	% P1 year children with healthy weight	77.9%	75.7%	N/A	77.3%	77.1%	74.7%		76.6%	76%	N/A	75%	77%	77%		
FWI 11	% P1 year children free from obvious dental decay	69.8%	73.2%	N/A	70.9%	69.6%	72.3%		71.6%	72.4%	N/A	73.1%	73.8%	73.9%		
FWI12a	% of S4 pupils who have ever taken illegal drugs, drugs formerly known as legal highs, solvents or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)					11.0%	N/A	-	Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			10.0%	N/A	N/A	
FWI12b	% of S2 pupils who drink alcohol about once-a-week	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022April 2023)					4.4%	N/A	-	Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			2.3%	N/A	N/A	
FWI13a	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: Anxiety	Baseline 2024						29%	-	No benchmark available						
FWI13b	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: School Stress	Baseline 2024						65%	-	No benchmark available						
FWI13c	% of school counselling referrals with the primary reason of: Home Stress	Baseline 2024						63%	-	No benchmark available						

Measure	Fife							Benchmark (national unless stated otherwise)						Trend vs benchmark	
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	5 year trend	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		
Active															
FWI14	% of primary & secondary pupils engaging in physical extra-curricular activity	N/A	N/A	N/A	28%	N/A	39%		No benchmark available						
FWI15	Percentage of P1-S6 children participating in community activities (participation in at least one from list)	<i>Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022 April 2023)</i>				81%	N/A		<i>Source: National HWB Census 2021-22</i>			81%	N/A	N/A	
Achieving															
FWI16	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 children achieving expected CfE levels in literacy	74.2%	N/A	64.6%	68.4%	70.3%	71.1%		72.3%	N/A	66.9%	70.5%	72.7%	73.0%	
FWI17	Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 children achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy	80.2%	N/A	71.3%	74.8%	77.0%	77.3%		79.1%	N/A	74.7%	77.9%	79.6%	80.3%	
FWI18	Percentage of all school leavers in positive destination on leaving school	94.4%	91.9%	93.9%	94.8%	95.3%	95.6%		95.0%	93.3%	95.5%	95.7%	95.9%	95.7%	
Nurtured															
FWI19	% Early Learning and Childcare settings achieving Care Inspectorate grades of good or better	93.8%	97.5%	98.0%	94.6%	91.0%	91.2%		N/A	N/A	N/A	87.7%	88.5%	88.3%	
FWI20	Data on take up by eligible 2-year-olds of places in Early Learning and Childcare settings	<i>Source: Care Inspectorate Early Learning & Childcare Statistics. Eligible 2-year-olds calculated from 2023.</i>				56%	65.80%		<i>Source: Care Inspectorate Early Learning & Childcare Statistics. Eligible 2-year-olds calculated from 2023.</i>			52.0%	59%		

Respected and responsible																
FWI21	Self Confidence - % of P5 to S1 pupils who feel confident often or all of the time.	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022 April 2023)					48.1%	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			50.4%	N/A	N/A	
FWI22	Child voice/rights	To be developed							N/A							
Included																
FWI23	% of P5-S6 pupils who spend 3 or more hours of their free time on weekdays using electronic devices such as computers, tablets (like iPad) or smart phones	Source: Fife Health & Wellbeing Survey (baseline survey undertaken March 2022 April 2023)					66%	N/A		Source: National HWB Census 2021-22			64.1%	N/A	N/A	
FWI24	Number of children in temporary accommodation at 31 March	N/A	343	313	388	533	387		Data source: Service Data Work to be undertaken to scope benchmark							
FWI25	Number of children involved in homeless applications	N/A	1222	1182	1203	1368	1148		Data source: Service Data Work to be undertaken to scope benchmark							

Section 6. How Our Plan Is Supporting National Policy

The Children & Young People Act 2014 sets out a requirement to deliver services aimed at promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children, young people and their families.

The Act is underpinned by the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which were incorporated into Scottish law by the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. The UNCRC was developed in 1992 and is the most widely adopted human rights treaty globally. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reports periodically on signatories to determine their progress towards realising rights. Incorporation into domestic law brings stronger accountability in domestic law where breaches may have occurred. It means that public bodies must act compatibly with the UNCRC and give children (those under the age of 18) or those acting on their behalf the right to seek legal redress, and the Children's Commissioner additional powers to act where rights may have been breached.



The policy framework of **Getting It Right For Every Child** is now well embedded across the Fife partnership supported by key local policy frameworks such as the Getting in Right in Fife framework and the Child Wellbeing Pathway which promotes early & proportionate intervention to address wellbeing needs and concerns across the spectrum of need and continuum of support – whether universal, additional or intensive.

The Independent Care review, commissioned in 2017, led to a root and branch review of Scotland's care system resulting in the publication of **The Promise** in 2020. The five foundations of the Promise are central to the new Children's Services plan, reflect the key principles of the Belonging to Fife Strategy and weave across our priorities. They will help to transform our systems, practice and culture, ensuring that:

Voice: children are listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care.

Family: where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay there – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties they face.

Care: where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

People: children that we care for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to be compassionate.

Scaffolding: children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The 'scaffolding' of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.



How Our Plan Supports Strategic Planning of Children's Services

	Main focus of monitoring for outcomes (SHANARRI)	Contribution to key statutory responsibilities and national policy delivery	Statutory Planning & Reporting Responsibility	Main links to wider partnership planning and delivery of related services
Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy • Active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All health-related planning and reporting responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Social Care Partnership • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership
Equity and Equality Coordination Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving • Included • Nurtured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Child Poverty Action Reporting • Protected Characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan 4 Fife (Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention) • Strategic Equity Fund
Supporting Families Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included • Nurtured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Intervention • Whole Family Wellbeing • Family Support • Commissioning Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole Family Wellbeing Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan 4 Fife (No Wrong Door) • Best Value
Children in Fife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Nurtured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention • GIRFEC • The Promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Services Planning and Reporting • Joint Inspection of Children's Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fife Partnership • Corporate Parenting Board • Child Protection Committee • Chief Officers Public Safety Group (COPS)
Children's Rights Oversight Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respected • Responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Rights • UNCRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Rights Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of children's rights across wider partnership services
Children's Services Data Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the range of data available across SHANARRI for key risk groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring alignment with the National Performance Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting a regular cycle of reporting on progress for each improvement priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting of outcomes for wider strategic planning (e.g., Plan 4 Fife)

How Our Plan Promotes Children's Rights

Each key strategic group has oversight of children's rights related to that improvement priority. In addition, the Children's Rights Oversight Group oversees the Partnership's collective responsibility for delivery of the UNCRC.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group

Article 24: Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

Article 33: Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs

Article 34: The government should protect children from sexual exploitation



Equity and Equality Coordination Group

Article 2: All children have all these rights, no matter who they are.

Article 23: Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society

Article 26: Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.



Supporting Families Strategy Group

Article 5: Governments should let families and communities guide

their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way.

Article 9: Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after.

Article 18: Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child.



Children in Fife

Article 3: When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

Article 19: Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected

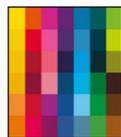
Article 22: Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees should get help and protection

Article 36: Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation.



Children's Rights Oversight Group

Oversight of the UNCRC



Article 4: Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all rights.



Article 12:

Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them.



Article 42:

Governments should ensure that everyone knows about children's rights.



Appendix 1 – Report on the use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is being used in Fife as the basis for improving support for families. This work is overseen by the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group, which includes representation from partners within Fife Children's Services Partnership.

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Leadership Group produce an Annual Report, which sets out in detail how funding for whole family support has been used to improve support for families in Fife across a range of different projects.

A copy of the report for year 3 of the Fund, covering work progressed during 2024-25, is available at:

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/WFWF25>

Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) Programme – Year 3
Guidance & Template for reporting progress as part of annual Children's Services Plans (CSP) reports 2024-2025

SECTION 1: Activities, WFWF Logic Model Outcomes, and Estimated Budget Allocated

For all responses, please include clear descriptions of activities, groups involved, sources of evidence.

Activity 1:

Question 1: Activity title and description:

Family & Parenting Support- Evidence based programmes
This activity is based on the early years Family Nurture Approach (FNA) evaluation and focused on re-engagement with parenting and family learning approaches in early years, primary and secondary school aged children/ young people. This involved coordinating and establishing a framework for training and delivery of evidence-based programmes. Mapping of current family support resources was completed with consideration of the wider 'offer' across the partnership from pre- birth- 18 yrs. Fife has strong evaluative evidence from the FNA with improved outcomes in respect to early literacy and family wellbeing. This work was led by a seconded team, most staff had substantive posts in the Children & Families, Family Support Service. The aim of this activity was to improve access to a range of evidence-based group work across the continuum leading to better outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Children & Families service redesign has been informed by this programme of work and has culminated in a new operating model from April 2025 comprising Early Help & Support and Enhanced Children & Families Teams in all 7 localities of Fife. The previous Family Support Service has now been fully integrated into the EH&S Teams and delivery of evidence-based group work will be driven by the 7 Teams in each locality in Fife. Data from the Psychology of Parenting Programme has evidenced good retention rates for Incredible Years groups and improvement in Strength & Difficulties questionnaires. Feedback from parents has also been highly positive.

 File data update
Jan - Jul 2024.pdf

 File data update
Aug - Dec 2024.pdf

Question 2:

a) Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to? Please indicate the relevant early, intermediate, and long-term outcomes (see updated Logic Model on pgs. 10-13).

b) For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing? In your response, please describe how this has happened (processes/ mechanisms) and who has been involved (i.e. CSPP staff roles and, where applicable, the types of families receiving support – particularly the six priority family types of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan).

-Better collective awareness of available support – mapping completed and shared across the CSPP

1

Appendix 2 – Further Information

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is the Scottish Government's standard approach to measuring relative levels of disadvantage across Scotland. It provides information about a range of resources and opportunities available to communities at a local level. These relate to: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing.



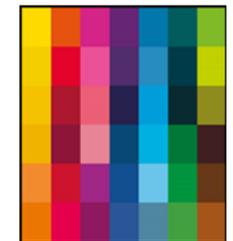
SIMD is calculated for defined local, geographical areas called data zones. There are 6,976 datazones across Scotland.

Each of these datazones fall within five families, called quintiles, according to the overall level of multiple deprivation recorded by SIMD for that area. SIMD Quintile 1 (often abbreviated to **SIMD Q1**) refers to the most deprived areas, as measured by SIMD.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/>

United Nations on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 gained Royal Assent on 16 January 2024 and will be in force from 16 July 2024. The UNCRC was developed in 1992 and is the most widely adopted human rights treaty globally. The UN reports periodically on signatories to determine progress towards realising rights.



Incorporation brings stronger accountability in domestic law where breaches may have occurred. Incorporation means that public bodies must act compatibly with the UNCRC, and gives children, defined as those under the age of 18, or those acting on their behalf the right to seek legal redress, and the Children's Commissioner additional powers to intervene or bring proceedings where rights may have been breached.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/human-rights/childrens-rights/>

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

The Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (**CRWIA**) is the approach that officials use to provide evidence that proper consideration has been given to the impact that any policy or strategy will have on children and young people up to the age of 18.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/childrens-rights-and-wellbeing-impact-assessments-guidance/>

GIRFEC

Scotland's national approach for supporting children, is called Getting it right for every child (**GIRFEC**). It supports families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.



GIRFEC helps the different agencies, services and teams who form part of the Fife Children's Services Partnership work better together.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

The Promise

In 2017, the Scottish Government launched an Independent Review of Scotland's Care System (Children and Young People) to help Scotland deliver the 'world's best care system'.

The Promise is responsible for driving the work of change demanded by the findings of the Independent Care Review, following their publication in 2020. It works with all kinds of organisations to support shifts in policy, practice and culture so Scotland can *#KeepThePromise* it made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults and their families - that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential.



Further information can be found at: <https://thepromise.scot/>

